

WINDSOR TOWN FORUM

WEDNESDAY, 22 JULY 2020

PRESENT: Councillors John Bowden (Chairman), Samantha Rayner (Vice-Chairman), Christine Bateson, David Cannon, Jon Davey, Karen Davies, Helen Price, Shamsul Shelim and Amy Tisi

Also in attendance: Councillor John Baldwin, Councillor Gurpreet Bhangra, Councillor Gerry Clark, Councillor Andrew Johnson and Councillor Gurch Singh

Officers: Paul Roach, David Scott, Andy Carswell, Fatima Rehman, Christopher Wheeler and Julia White

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hilton. Councillor Story was attending as substitute.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

MINUTES

Councillor Knowles proposed that actions from previous minutes should be reviewed offline and which actions should be brought forward, with the impact of COVID-19 on the actions in mind.

Councillor Price said the Windsor Neighbourhood Plan was approved, and should have started to progress to the referendum, but was delayed due to COVID-19. Councillor Price wanted this to be progressed to referendum. The Panel were informed by David Scott, Head of Communities, that under the current legislations, referendums could not be held until May 2021, but other work could continue in the interim in connection with developing the plan and preparing for a local referendum.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2020 be approved subject to the amendment: Councillor Tisi's attendance to be changed to present.

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Chairman updated the Panel Members on the previous actions arising from previous minutes.

Army Covenant - Send Susy Shearer the posters and any information on the Army Covenant. Responsible officer: Vanessa Faulkner	Posters were not produced by the Communications Team due to workloads and COVID-19, but screen savers were produced. Awaiting the Council to secure Gold status, at which time all literature would be reproduced and circulated to Members.
Army Covenant - Invite the Families Officers from the Coldstream Guards and the Welsh	The Chairman was in contact and in the process of an update.

Guards to the next meeting. Responsible officer: Chairman and/or Cllr Knowles	
Homelessness Update - Invite Tracy Hendren, Head of Housing and Environmental Health Service, and the MEAM Coordinator to the next Windsor Town Forum meeting with a report on the council's approach to homelessness. Responsible officer: Clerk	Paul Roach, Windsor, Eton and Ascot Town Manager, to update. Tracy Hendren was contacted, awaiting response.
Windsor Plan - Invite the Managing Director of the RBWM Property Company to the next Windsor Town Forum meeting to discuss the ongoing strategy of the Town. Responsible officer: Clerk	Barbara Richardson, Managing Director, RBWM Property Company Ltd, was due to present in the previous meeting which was cancelled. Due to other commitments, she was unable to attend the Forum, but was available for the following Forum to update.
Thames Valley Police - Invite Thames Valley Police to the next Town Forum meeting to provide an update on crime figures for the Windsor area and to answer any questions from residents. Responsible officer: Clerk	Inspector 3330 Tracey Croucher was invited to the meeting and all future meetings.

Hostile Vehicle Mitigations updates were no longer required as the temporary measure have been removed, and the permanent integrated measures now installed.

UPDATE FROM THAMES VALLEY POLICE

Inspector 3330 Tracey Croucher introduced the item and said she had been appointed in her role in the last month. She was briefed by Inspector Louise Warbrick who had previously attended the forum, but was happy to continue to provide updates, to the Forum, as needed. She explained that based on previous report she could confirm the following as key updates:

- Cycle theft was prevalent in Windsor, with one individual arrested and charged of cycle theft. Several stolen cycles were found at their address, and these cycles were returned to owner's.
- Ascot had a significant rise in theft of motor vehicles with one individual charged and in custody.
- Thames Valley Police (TVP) area like all others had been affected by COVID-19 and therefore the crime figures were skewed compared pre COVID-19 periods. Due to the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions for the last 3 to 4 months, real crime went down as everyone was at home and off the roads. There was now a rise in crime, particularly violent crimes, due to reducing restrictions.

Tracey Croucher said Jeff Pick's worked on the crime prevention through the Thames Valley alert, which was an online system that explained how crime could be prevented and information about the area. This included topics such as fraud prevention, particularly for vulnerable people in society.

Councillor Price asked if Tracey Croucher had replaced Louise Warbrick, and Members were informed that Louise changed her role to Problem Solving & Safeguarding Inspector, and Tracey took over Louise's role.

Councillor Price asked if there were quicker response times when residents called 101, and Members were informed that there was still a message on 101 to use other contacts during

COVID-19. Tracey felt the web form on the TVP website was an easier way of contact TVP instead of 101.

Councillor Knowles asked that as things returned to normal, how was TVP going to manage COVID-19 regulations compliance. Paul Roach, Windsor and Eton Town Centre Manager, said a working group was established in May 2020, and premises that did not comply to regulations were dealt with on an individual basis. Visits to premises by a joint team including the Licensing team and Tracey Croucher's team have been and continue to be undertaken.

Councillor Knowles asked how non-compliance to regulations in shops and private properties was going to be monitored. The Members were informed that fixed penalty notices could not be enforced in private property's but could be in public places and retail outlets. Engagement with the public was preferred, with education and encouragement, then enforcement as the last resort.

Councillor Knowles said there were perennial issues with anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the night-time economy (NTE). The Members were informed that TVP was working closely with the Borough, with an ever-evolving plan in place with more establishments such as pubs and restaurants opening across Windsor. With pubs and clubs being closed, young people needed to get out in places such as The Brocas and Cock Marsh. Dispersal orders and other actions were put into place in open areas where necessary.

The Vice Chairman thanked the team for their work and asked if there was a view of more dispersal orders due to larger crowds in open spaces. The Members were informed that there was an increase of dispersal order use, with pre-emptive orders in places for high risk locations, as well as using social media to spread the word. Managing ASB at The Brocas was a difficult task and was part of a larger work led by PC Jay Patel, as well as neighbourhood wardens.

Tracey Croucher said the area was patrolled and there was a need to work together as a community to prevent ASB, or there could be a risk of restricting public access to The Brocas. The Vice Chairman said many residents interacted with the team's staff and the social media messages were humorous and engaging.

Councillor Bateson asked if police stations were closed due to COVID-19, and Members were informed that front counters were closed for Windsor and Maidenhead and will be notified on social media when they were open. Councillor Price asked if there was a front counter at Windsor police station or if there was a buzzer and Members were informed that Windsor did not have a staffed front counter, whilst Maidenhead did.

Councillor Bateson was advised to visit Slough police station as both Windsor and Maidenhead were closed. The Chairman asked if Councillor Bateson should have visited another police station instead, and Members were informed that any TVP police station could be visited and their enquiry would be dealt with. However, there would be a delay if one was to go to a different force such as Surrey.

The Chairman requested for travelling officers to take note of the loud motor vehicle noise from exhaust systems, as the noise travelled a large distance and was a disturbance. He said there were cyclists on Prescod St, which was busy and asked for Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) and Community Wardens to be firmer with cyclists.

Tracey Croucher agreed and said cyclists on Prescod St were dangerous, with an operation taking place to target e-scooters and cyclists with educating on the safety concerns and move onto enforcement should education not be received. The Chairman said he would discuss with Paul Roach offline to notify cycling establishments that Prescod St was a cycling free area.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the order of business as detailed in the agenda be varied.

ROAD RESURFACING REVIEW 2019/20

Christopher Wheeler, Service Improvement Manager - Commissioning and Communities, introduced the item and said the report was requested by the Members in January and was due to be presented in the March meeting, but the meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19.

The paper was a review of the resurfacing programme in general and a focus on surface dressing which was part of asset management. The report covered the asset management approach for highways and how this fitted in with investment modelling. Department for Transport level of recommendation of highway and customer satisfaction was explored in the paper. The report ended with several roads that were surfaced dressed in 2019-20 that had failed. This was due to the surface dressing being laid in September 2019, which was not the best time of year for this work but was the slot allocated by the contractor. The roads were dealt with in May 2020.

Councillor Price said there were failed road dressings that needed to be re-surfaced in the west of Windsor that were not listed in the report. The Members were informed that any known failed road dressings should be reported to the highways mailbox so that they can be investigated.

Councillor Davies said footway in Clewer Park were resurfaced but were uneven, and the Members were informed that the quickest way to report road defects, repairs and fly tipping was through the website.

Councillor Cannon asked what the surface level agreement was for when residents should expect matters to be addressed, such as vegetation over the road. The Members were informed that the regulations had different timeframes depending on the work. For instance, there was a contractual service level agreement for urgent potholes to be dealt with within 24 hours. Overhanging vegetation was particularly pertinent during the growth season. The Borough was limited by the regulations within the Highway Act, as a notice had to be served to the landowner giving them up to 14 days, with up to 21 days for the landowner to appeal. If no action was taken by the landowner, the Borough could then cut back the vegetation and issue the cost to the landowner. The team used social media as a tool to encourage people to take responsibility to cut back vegetation and allow safe footways. A leaflet campaign was due to be launched on a similar basis.

Councillor Cannon asked what the timeframe was if the overgrown hedgerows were the Borough's ownership. The Members were informed that the Borough was responsible for clearing the footway from overgrown hedgerows. With 600km of highway, it was difficult to maintain the vegetation, particularly during the growing season, where the vegetation could grow back between highway inspections. There was an annual flailing programme where the team reviewed rural roads to clear vegetation. Residents were encouraged to report any overgrown vegetations online using the report it forms. The online forms had been updated to increase clarity in private and highway overhanging vegetation, which is then actioned by the contractors.

(Councillor Davey joined the meeting.)

Councillor Cannon asked for an estimated timeframe to expect highway vegetation to be managed. The Panel were informed the timeframe depended on the length of the road and amount of vegetation. The work needed to be programmed, with the larger and more extensive projects having a longer delay to be managed. Christopher Wheeler said he would speak to the team and come back with an estimated timeframe.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the order of business as detailed in the agenda be varied.

THEMED PEDESTRIAN CROSSING POINTS

Although the report had not been included on the Agenda at time of publication, the Chairman agreed to consider it as an urgent item, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was included in the Town recovery plan, and was a positive communication to Windsor residents.

Councillor Clark, Lead Member Transport and Infrastructure, introduced the item which was a proposal to introduce two themed pedestrian crossings in Maidenhead and Windsor. The crossing points would have a message or design painted on the carriageway, which would be inclusive and celebrated residents and the community. Work was underway to identify potential locations as well as minimising the impact of traffic management while the carriageways was closed to paint.

Consultation was due to take place online and would include businesses and the public and aimed to highlight themes that could be celebrated. Celebratory themes could include the towns' diversity, heritage, volunteers, good causes, charities, societies, the NHS, emergency services, unsung heroes and heroes. This was a way to show appreciation for groups and people in the town.

There may be difference causes and messages illustrated on the pedestrian crossing. Councillor Clark encouraged for concepts to be brought to the consultation, which would be appreciated by both residents and visitors. Whilst the project was in its early stages, it was good value for money and was yet to go to the consultation period.

Councillor Tisi asked if the rainbow coloured crossing to celebrate pride month that was shared on Twitter by Councillor Reynolds was the envisioned plan. Councillor Clark agreed this was the idea, to celebrate communities that the residents want to communicate. As the crossing was limited to two sites, there was a need of selectivity.

Councillor Tisi was supportive of asking residents for ideas and asked if a selection of good quality choices would be given, as there was a risk of being inundated with ideas. Councillor Clark said the first stage was to ask the public for ideas, with the next stage to propose the most supported ideas for the residents to finalise.

Councillor Knowles supported the project and proposed the most visible crossing at the high street. If this was executed well, the crossing could become a road landmark like Abbey Road in London, where visitors travel to have a picture taken. He was supportive of the LGBTQ+ community being celebrated at the crossing point and said it would be good marketing for the wedding business in the Guildhall. It would be representative of same sex couples and civil partnerships, who could post photographs on the rainbow crossing.

Councillor Clark informed the Members that the themed crossing would be good for the local economy particularly after COVID-19 and encourage visitors back to the Windsor town centre.

Councillor Price said this was an exciting idea and asked if there was any information on any incidences that have taken place at themed crossings with distracted drivers. Councillor Clark informed the Members that he was not aware of safety concerns from previous crossings, however these questions would need to be answered before going ahead with the project. Other concerns were the impact of closing the carriageway whilst it was painted which would need to be addressed.

Councillor Davey said this was a good idea to attract visitors, however Windsor was an attractive location for visitors regardless. He wanted to know where the budget came from for

the project and if the money could be used elsewhere. He also asked if residents would be given the option to not have a themed crossing in the survey. Finally, he asked if there was a need for a specific paint that could cost equivalent to creating a new crossing.

Councillor Clark informed the Members that this was a good value concept which would be in place for approximate six months, with a view to make this a permanent or updated fixture if residents were supportive of this. The budget was approximately a few thousand pounds, and there would need to be over fifteen themed crossings to be made to equate to the cost of creating a new crossing point. He agreed that this was not an essential piece of work and may not be a good use of the Council's money. If there was not significant support for the project, it would not go ahead.

The Vice Chairman said this was a great idea which was effective and engaging across the country. With the uptake from voluntary organisations and volunteers through COVID-19, this was a welcomed project that could bring them together to celebrate.

Councillor Clark said he would keep the Members updated on the next stages and said an email correspondence was going to come through from Highways.

TOWN MANAGER'S UPDATE

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RADIAN EMPLOYABILITY PROJECT

Councillor Price introduced the item to Members and said Radian was the largest social housing provider in Windsor. Radian successfully won a bid for European money and created a project to improve the employability prospect for residents, particularly in Clewer and Dedworth. The project could be extended to residents within Windsor if the project was not completely taken up by residents. The project was due to start in March 2020 but was set back due to COVID-19 and was redesigned so it could be delivered at distance. The eligibility for the remaining seminars was to be over 16 years old and unemployed.

There were four seminars as part of the project, which included:

- Residents would be equipped with employability skills, such as how to develop a professional curriculum vitae, job search, create a job application, and perform at an interview.
- One-to-one employment advice and guidance would be given to individuals.
- A wellness series would focus on both physical and mental wellbeing and how residents could be digitally up to date
- How residents who were self-employed could improve their prospect. Eligibility for this part of the project was to either be in work or be running a business and wanted help to improve.

Councillor Price said this service was for residents and not exclusively for Radian customers and further details could be sought by calling 0800 432 0570. Councillor Price was involved in this project by promoting and understanding how residents could benefit from the project.

Councillor Knowles said this was a tribute to Councillor Price's engagement with Radian, which was an achievement and it was beneficial for Radian to attach to projects like this going forward.

RBWM COMMUNITY ASSET PROJECT

Councillor Price introduced the item and said she would provide a brief introduction as the individuals who were involved in the project could not attend the meeting. Councillor Price asked if they would be invited to the next meeting, and the Chairman informed the Members that this would be considered.

Some good had come out of the COVID-19, as several people stepped forward to support the community in the pandemic. The project was led by officers to identify what communities would look like in the future and how they would be supported. The project looked to bring together all existing community support groups to meet the needs of residents. Whilst the project was across the whole Borough, the project would be trialled in Windsor. The Borough commissioned Community Learning and Skills Service (CLASS) based in Slough to start the project, which started by interviewing Windsor councillors. This included asking questions on what Councillors thought the need of the community was, what community groups exist and if there were any other organisations that should be spoken to. The next stage would be to consult residents and ask what the support mechanisms should be and then a funded model that could be rolled out. She said most Councillors had been approached to interview for the project.

The Chairman said he had not received an invite.

The Vice Chairman said she attended a meeting where she received an update on the project. She said the project came out of COVID-19 and from the Health and Adult Social Service Department in the Royal Borough. The project attempted to identify the needs of the community and trial the project in Clewer and Dedworth. The project board would be made up of charities, GPs and service providers, social workers and housing officers to help coordinate the projects as the needs arose.

The project was a learning curve and would be tested for 8-9 months. The next step for the project was for a meeting between Radian, the youth engagement service and Slough's learning supports group to find out more about the project. She felt the number of volunteers that came forward as a result of COVID-19 was phenomenal and this opened to opportunity to help residents and deliver tailored to need.

Councillor Davey said he had an interview and had provided suggestions. He felt this was a good project, but Radian should consider supporting residents in social housing in the first instance. Councillor Davey said the project needed greater business focus, as volunteers historically had a strong business background and then came into volunteering.

He suggested CLASS to liaise with Paul Roach who could bring other people forward as part of the process. He feared that once the furlough scheme was terminated, there would be many people who would need financial help and it would be difficult to expect those who have lost their jobs to volunteer. Whilst GPs and police were salaried individuals who worked in the community were not volunteers, so it was necessary to involve volunteers.

WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman introduced the Work Programme (WP) for the Forum. He addressed the future agenda items in the previous minutes as followed:

Royal British Legion – and their plans for the Windsor area Poppy Appeal	To remain on the WP as this was to take place in November.
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VE day plans	To be removed as VE day had taken place.
Full report on Hostile Vehicle Measures and vehicles being parked on Sheet Street during changing of the guard.	The new measures were in and was to be addressed once the change of guards resumed. The vehicle parking on Sheet Street was to be assessed by the Security and Safety Partnership that dealt with vehicles on Sheet Street, and be reported by Neil Walters, Parking Principal.
Windsor night-time economy/Thames Valley Police update	This was regularly updated with the TVP update.
Military Risk Assessments for changing of the guard to assess and evaluate security and safety in terms of events and action points	Ongoing item with the TVP and army on a need to know basis and was proposed to be removed from the WP.
Windsor homelessness	This was considered a Full Council item. A general overview on homelessness in Windsor was welcomed.
Windsor Town Plan	This was updated by David Scott. Barbara Richardson was invited to the next meeting to give an update.
Parking machine review	This was now historical and was proposed to be removed from the WP.
Christmas Market	Paul Roach was proposed to present this - the future was uncertain with the possibility of a second lockdown.
Windsor Plan – looking at retail offer in the Town Centre	Paul Roach would update on the next retail offer.
Report on poor quality road dressings that have not been resurfaced	This had now been updated in the current meeting.
Report on air pollution	Figures of NO ₂ from aircrafts would be substantially reduced due to the single runway. There were CO ₂ concerns from delivery and general vehicles. With the low parking and coach figures, the pollution figures would be low.

The Chairman invited Members to bring forward items that they would like on the agenda in the meeting or on email.

Councillor Davies said resident Mr Thomas Wigley asked by email for an update on the progress towards 'no idling' signs to help improve air quality in the Borough. The Chairman said this will be updated in the Forum.

Councillor Knowles said he wanted to understand how risk was defined for the Military Risk Assessments agenda item. He wanted to understand the difference between the new and old barriers and the difference between them. The Chairman said the barriers information could

be shared on a need to know basis. The Members were informed by David Scott that this update could be given, with the possibility of a Part I and Part II meeting.

Councillor Knowles said he received commitment from the Families Officers from the Coldstream Guards and the Welsh Guards to attend forthcoming meetings for an update.

Councillor Price said the homelessness strategy was not a rough sleeper strategy and it was important to know how the Borough was moving forward on the strategy. The Members were informed by David Scott that the government required the homelessness strategy to be a combined homelessness and rough sleeper initiative strategy.

Councillor Price proposed to discuss youth services in the Forum, which was part of the constitution. The Chairman confirmed that youth services specific to Windsor could be brought to the Forum.

Councillor Price said the topic on how to increase resident participation needed to be brought to the Forum, as there were no resident questions asked directly to the Forum. The Chairman said there was a need to increase resident participation at the Forum, and he had advertised the Forum through the neighbourhood watch organiser, Jeff Pick.

Councillor Davey said the agenda had a more detailed work programme rather than the future agenda items listed in the previous minutes. He proposed to have more flexible agendas, with a list of topics shortlisted by the Chairman two weeks in advance of the meeting. The Chairman said the Forum needed to be mindful of officers' workload and would be in contact to decide the deadline for Members to propose items for the next meeting.

Councillor Davey suggested correspondence with Councillor Singh on how he made Maidenhead Town Forum popular with residents.

Councillor Tisi said many items on the WP were relevant, including the Cycle Action Group (CAG) and the changes to the infrastructure. She proposed for Councillor Clark to update on this. She also proposed to discuss how the second tranche of government funding was going to be used to improve cycling and walking routes. She also proposed to invite representatives from the CAG to dispel the myths of the group and share what they were trying to achieve. The Chairman noted the item.

Councillor Knowles proposed to review the COVID-19 outbreak plan in the next meeting, which would cover the actions to be taken if there was another outbreak. He also requested for the Borough to advertise the Zoom link for the meeting on social media so that residents could join the meeting. The Chairman said he envisioned to get the meeting advertised in time for the next meeting.

The Chairman thanked all officers, Members and residents.

The meeting, which began at 6.18 pm, finished at 8.59 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....